

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting a
Department of Defense Budget Amendment
May 29, 2002

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed request for an FY 2003 budget amendment for the Department of Defense reflecting my decision to cancel the Army's Crusader artillery system. The budget totals proposed in my FY 2003 Budget would not be affected by this amendment.

The details of this request are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director

of the Office of Management and Budget. I concur with his comments and observations.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 30.

Remarks Following a Cabinet Meeting and an Exchange With Reporters
May 30, 2002

The President. We started the Cabinet meeting today with a prayer from Secretary Mineta, who in his prayer reminded us that this is a somber day for America. It is the day in which we've removed all the debris from Ground Zero. On behalf of a grateful nation, I want to thank all those who participated in the cleanup of that deadly site and want our Nation to continue to offer our prayer to those families and friends and citizens who still hurt as a result of the attacks of September the 11th.

As well I talked about our trip, as did the Secretary. We had a very successful trip to Europe, successful bilaterals with France and Germany and Italy. And of course, the highlight of the trip was signing the treaty with Russia that really signifies to the world that the cold war is over, Russia is our friend, and we need to work together. And then we went—I've signed an agreement with NATO and Russia that basically said the same thing. And this is a good—this is the dawn of a new era in relationship with Russia that will be very positive for our country and for world

peace. And after all, that's what we work to achieve, which is world peace.

I'll be glad to answer a couple of questions. Yes, Fournier [Ron Fournier, Associated Press], and then Randy [Randall Mikkelsen, Reuters].

FBI Reorganization/Civil Liberties

Q. Mr. President, the FBI is lifting restrictions on domestic spying, including against religious institutions and political organizations. Is there a risk of going too far in the battle against terrorism and actually losing some freedoms that are very important to the country?

The President. Of course, the Attorney General will be briefing the Nation today about what we intend to do. And here's what we intend to do: We intend to honor our Constitution and respect the freedoms that we hold so dear; and secondly, we want to make sure that we do everything we can to prevent a further attack, protect America.

The FBI needed to change. It was a organization full of fine people that loved America, but they—the organization didn't

meet the times. And so I appreciate Director Mueller's reform measures. This is a man who came on to the FBI not many days before the September the 11th attack, and he's now reforming this important agency, all aimed at preventing a further attack. Our most important job is to protect America. And the initiative that the Attorney General will be outlining today will guarantee our Constitution, and that's important for the citizens to know.

Randy, and then John [John King, Cable News Network].

Pakistan-India Relations/Al Qaida

Q. Mr. President, are you preparing to activate plans for evacuating American civilians and troops from Pakistan and India? And how much concern do you have that the standoff over Kashmir is allowing Al Qaida to regroup and operate in Pakistan?

The President. Well, first of all, the Secretary is—both Secretaries are analyzing what it would take to protect American lives, if need be. Secondly, we are making it very clear to both Pakistan and India that war will not serve their interests. And we're a part of a international coalition applying pressure to both parties, particularly to President Musharraf. He must stop the incursions across the line of control—he must do so. He said he would do so. We and others are making it clear to him that he must live up to his word.

Al Qaida is a—they'll find weakness, and we are doing everything we can to continue to shore up our efforts in—on the Pakistani-Afghan border. And they shouldn't think they're going to gain any advantage as a result of any conflict that may be—or talk of conflict between India and Pakistan, because we're still going to hunt them down.

This is a long war. You know, I was just reflecting the other day, we've only been at this for—we've haven't even been fighting this war for a year yet. And we've got a lot of work to do. And there will be moments where the Al Qaida thinks

that, you know, maybe America is not after them, and they'll feel safe and secure. And you know, they'll think they'll kind of settle into some cave somewhere. But they don't understand the intention of this administration, which is to patiently hunt these people down, and that's exactly what we're going to do.

Q. Are you sending Secretary Rumsfeld next week to the region?

The President. Yes, he's going there. Deputy Secretary of State Armitage is going this week, and then Secretary Rumsfeld is going as well.

Q. This week or next, sir?

The President. Next week.

Secretary Rumsfeld. Next week.

The President. Yes, early next week.

John, last question.

Legislative Agenda/Situation in the Middle East

Q. Sir, a two-part, if you don't mind. One, there seems to be a sense again in the Middle East with respect to a period of treading water. CIA Director Tenet is supposed to go. I'm trying to get your sense of whether you have seen any tangible proof from the parties that they are willing to take the steps necessary to move beyond the standoff.

And you have it on the table today also, your domestic policy team—I'm wondering if you come back from the trip, if you discuss today the sense of frustration, if you will, that Congress went home for Memorial Day without acting on many of the things a few months back you had asked them to do.

The President. Well, let me address the second first. We have been pleased with how many of our initiatives have moved through the House of Representatives and been frustrated by the fact they haven't moved through the Senate.

Having said that, I was pleased that the Senate moved the trade promotion authority bill and hope when they get back that they call a conference quickly and get this

bill to my desk. It's important for people who are looking for work here in America.

But there's still a lot of work to be done in the Senate. They've got to get this supplemental done quickly. It's important that we get a supplemental out and, frankly, a supplemental that doesn't bust the budget. And we'll be looking forward to working with the Senators to explain to them that the supplemental ought to focus on emergency measures, measures that are needed to fight the war, to button up the homeland. But the supplemental shouldn't be viewed as an opportunity to load up—to load it up with special projects.

In terms of the Middle East, we are sending—we sent Ambassador Burns there yesterday; Director Tenet is going—all aimed at providing the steps necessary to provide the institutions that will create stability in a potential Palestinian state. And that's very important. That's very important because it begins to say that people are responsible. It's tangible evidence that what I said in the Rose Garden is what we mean, that people need to be responsible for their actions. Mr. Arafat needs to be responsible, and part of that responsibility is to reform a security force so that it will actually keep security in the region.

The Secretary was telling me that there was some talk of a new finance minister being promoted in the Palestinian Author-

ity, a person that has got international standing. That is a positive development, because one of the things that worries us is spending any international aid on an authority that might not keep good books, that the money might not actually go to help the Palestinian people but might end up in somebody's pocket. And that concerns us.

So John, to answer your question, we are—we are making progress on a strategy that will put the underpinnings of a Palestinian state in place. And it's going to take a while; we recognize that. But we're going to continue to work the issue very hard.

Q. Have you seen enough from the parties to schedule the conference the Secretary wants to hold or—

The President. Well, the scheduling of a conference is a matter of making sure that the—that we find the right place and the right time to do so, and the Secretary is working on that.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:17 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan; William J. Burns, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs and former U.S. Ambassador to Jordan; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority.

Remarks at a Celebration of African American Music, History, and Culture May 31, 2002

The President. Good afternoon, and welcome to the people's house, the White House. Laura and I are so very pleased that you all came, and we're glad to see you. We had a wonderful time marking Black Music Month last year, and we had some pretty strong company—James Brown, Lionel Hampton, Shirley Caesar, the Four Tops—and we've got some great

names with us today as well. And you're welcome. And we're looking forward to a fine afternoon, celebrating music loved by all the world and born right here in America.

I want to thank Laura for escorting me in today. [*Laughter*] I appreciate so very much our Secretary of Education, Mr. Rod Paige. Thank you for being here, Rod. He